

REMARKS

Claims 2, 5-7 and 9-14 are pending in this application, of which claims 2, 5-7 and 9-10 have been amended and claims 11-14 are newly-added. Claims 1, 3, 4 and 8 have been canceled.

Claims 1-6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,170,154 to Swarup in view of U.S. Patent 5,631,478 to Okumura. However, the Examiner also indicated that claims 7, 9 and 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Accordingly, claims 1, 3, 4 and 8 have been canceled and claims 7, 9 and 10 have been amended to be in independent form. Claims 2, 5 and 6 have been amended to depend from claim 7 and new claims 11-14 have been added, where new claims 11-12 are the same as claim 2 except depending from claims 9 and 10, respectively; new claim 13 is the same as claim 5 except depending from claim 9; and claim 14 is the same as claim 6 except depending from claim 9.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims 2, 5-7 and 9-14, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.


If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. **10/078,346**
Response to Office Action dated December 30, 2004

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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